

## Muscle Cells

(Read all 3 and choose 1 for chart)



### Skeletal Muscles

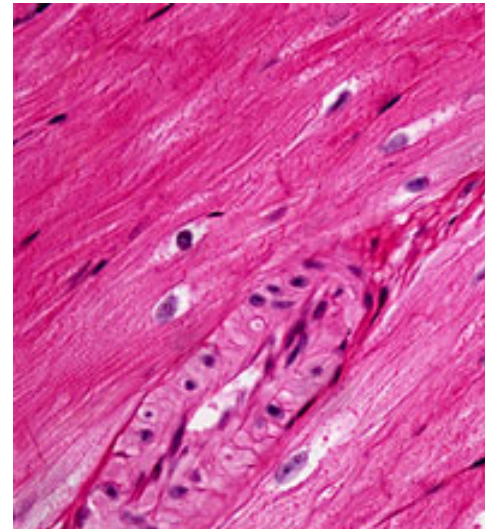
Skeletal muscles are usually attached to bones. They are often called striated muscles because of their striated, or striped appearance. The cells of skeletal muscles can be very long, sometimes over 30 cm (~12 inches or 1 foot!). Your brain usually tells your skeletal muscles what to do.

Skeletal muscles are mainly used in movement, such as when you wiggle your toes, wave your hand, and smile.

### Smooth Muscles

Your body contains many muscles that operate on their own without instructions from your brain. These muscles are called smooth muscles because they appear smoother than other muscles. Smooth muscles can be found in your stomach, in your blood vessels, in your digestive system, and in your eyes. They are used to move food through your digestive system, regulate blood flow, and decrease the size of your pupils when there is too much light.

Smooth muscle cells are smaller than skeletal muscle cells, and smooth muscle cells don't have striations, or stripes.



### Cardiac (Heart) Muscles

Cardiac muscle is only found in your heart. Did you know your heart is actually a very strong muscle? Like skeletal muscle cells, cardiac muscles cells are striated, or striped. Like smooth muscle cells, cardiac muscle cells are not under the control of your brain. These cells of your heart are also connected directly to one another, allowing electrical pulses to flow through them.

